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Maryland State Department of Education Announces Fiscal Year 2023 Prekindergarten Grant Opportunities

Private Providers and Public Schools Now Eligible to Submit Proposals for \$26 Million in PreK Expansion Grants; Eligible Private Providers Can Also Apply for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Maryland State Prekindergarten Program

BALTIMORE, MD (February 23, 2022) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has announced two early learning grant initiatives that will expand the availability of high-quality full-day prekindergarten education to more Maryland children. Through the historic education reform law, Blueprint for Maryland's Future, both private and public providers have the opportunity to participate in the grant programs.

The \$26 million Prekindergarten Expansion Grants program is now available to both private child care providers and Local Education Agencies, providing \$13,000 in funding to each eligible child. The goal of the grant program is to broaden availability and expand access to high-quality, full-day prekindergarten for three-year-old and four-year-old students from families with incomes at or below 300% Federal Poverty Level (FPL), defined as \$79,500 for a family of four in 2022, as well as students with disabilities, homeless students, and children from homes in which English is not the primary spoken language.

MSDE also released applications for private providers who seek to participate in the Maryland State Prekindergarten Program, a new Blueprint for Maryland's Future initiative. This program provides State and local funding to private providers who enroll three-year-old and four-year-old students from families with incomes at or below 300% FPL in full-day prekindergarten. Total funding for the Maryland State Prekindergarten Program is \$10,094 per student in FY 2023 and increases each year thereafter.

“The early years of life are the most critical period for brain development and establish a child's trajectory for lifelong learning and achievement. The Maryland State Department of Education is eager to support and expand equitable access to high-quality prekindergarten education opportunities for Maryland's youngest children,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “This year marks an important first step as we embark upon implementing and leading Blueprint initiatives that emphasize expanded early education opportunities and ensure that a family's wealth is not an impediment to accessing high-quality prekindergarten.”

The Grant Information Guide, Frequently Asked Questions, and other information about the two grants programs, including customer service support sessions, can be found on the MSDE website:

<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/maryland-prek-grant-programs>. Program funding is contingent on final budget legislation for Fiscal Year 2023. Grant applications are now being accepted and are due by April 8, 2022.

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